1996 are declared. The Commission is now in the process of declaring the results.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise, in view of (e) above.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet at Edinburgh

*29. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister addressed CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet) held at Edinburgh in October, 1997;

(b) if so, what are the details of discussions held there and whether he was able to put forth a forceful case on behalf of the develping countries of the Commonwealth on issues of mass poverty and the problems of terrorism and drug-trafficking;

(c) whether he felt satisfied with the outcome of decisions taken at the Edinburgh Summit including his talks with other Heads of Government; and

(d) if so, with what results, particularly his meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) to (d) The PM addressed CHOGM held at Edinburgh in October, 1997. The discussions covered a wide range of subjects. The Prime Minister put forward a forceful case on behalf of the developing countries of the Commonwealth not only on issues of mass poverty and the problems of terrorism and drug-trafficking but also on a number of other issues.

The Prime Minister was satisfied both with the outcome of the discussions at the Commonwealth Summit, as also with his bilateral discussions with other Heads of Government, which were extremely useful and productive.

The Prime Minister had bilateral discussions with British PM Tony Blair, Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumartunga and Mauritian PM Navinchandra Ramgoolam. The meetings not only provided an opportunity to review bilateral relations but also to discuss other issues of mutual interest.

PM's meeting with Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif continued the renewed process of interaction at the highest political level between the two countries. The two leaders agreed on the need to enlarge people-to-people interaction and for this purpose to further relax visa regulations to enable greater travel between the two countries. They agreed that the staff strength of the Missions of the two countries would be augmented to facilitate the issuance of more visas. The two Prime Ministers decided that to mark the golden jubilee of the Independence of both countries, a series of lectures would be organised in both the countries in which prominent personalities in different fields from each others' countries would participate. The two Prime Ministers also directed the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries to continue their talks on the modalities for discussions on the subjects identified in the Joint Statement which was issued at the second round of Foreign Secretary level talks in Islamabad in June, 1997.

Visit to Foreign Countries

*30. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries visited by the Prime Minister during the inter-session period;

(b) the purpose of these visits;

(c) the details of the discussions that took place with the respective Governments; and

(d) the outcome of each of such discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALIM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) to (d) The Prime Minister visited Tanzania, New York, Italy, Uganda, South Africa, Egypt and Edinburgh after the conclusion of the Monsoon Session.

Prime Minister visited Tanzania (September 18-20), Uganda (October 4-5) and South Africa (October 5-10) in Sub-Saharan Africa. The visits were intended to provide renewed focus

to our relations with a continent with which our freedom movement has been closely linked and with which we are keen to forge a new partnership. Discussions with the Leadership of these countries were substantive and marked by close understanding and convergence of perceptions on all issues. The Prime Minister addressed South African Parliament during which he emphasised the need to give the strategic partnership between the two countries a peoples' orientation through greater cooperation on developmental issues and through joint efforts to promote a democratic international order. In all the three countries emphasis was placed on strengthening South-South linkages and on enhancing trade and economic ties. The visit also provided an opportunity for India to help harmonise and coordinate its positions on important regional and global issues. Tanzania in particular has publically expressed its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the 'to-be-restructured' UN Security Council. Salient features of Prime Minister's visit to these three African countries are detailed in the Statement (*See* below).

The Prime Minister visited Egypt to revitalise bilateral relations and to give boost to economic and trade cooperation. Discussions were held with President Mubarak and Prime Minister Ganzouri. The Foreign Minister of Egypt Mr. Amre Moussa called on the Prime Minister. Both sides agreed to set up a Joint Economic Group mainly comprising senior business representatives who would have a series of discussions over the next two months to identify specific projects for implementation in Egypt. During the visits, agreements on (i) Cooperation in the field of Tourism, (ii) Agreement on Mutual Assistance and Cooperation in Customs Matters, and (iii) Executive Programme of Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation between the two countries were signed.

Prime Minister visited New York from September 21-24 basically to address the 52nd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly and a meeting with the U.S. President. He participated in the general debate and addressed the General Assembly on September 24. He also held bilateral meetings with important world leaders: the President of Ukraine, Prime Ministers of Pakistan, Morocco and Jamaica, the Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of China and Foreign Ministers of France, Iran and Russia. Prime Minister also had meetings with Secretary General of the United Nations and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

With President Clinton, it was the first meeting between the two leaders and was intended to give direction and impetus to Indo-US relations. The meeting was not intended to finalise agreements on specific matters, but to enable a wide ranging exchange of views on bilateral, regional and global issues. As a follow-up of this meeting, a number of high level visits have been scheduled by the US including the Secretary of State, Commerce Secretary and Secretary, Health and Human Services, etc. During these visits, the dialogue will be taken further and in the course of which, specific issues in areas like economic and commercial cooperation, cooperation in science and technology, health etc., will be taken up.

During his one day visit to Italy, the Prime Minister called on the Italian President, had official discussions with the Italian Prime Minister, and an audience with the Pope. The exchanges with the Prime Minister were exceptionally warm and the Italian Prime Minister underlined striking complementarities in the two countries and said there were "unbelievable possibilities for working together". The discussions covered, apart from bilateral issues, developments in Europe and Asia. The Prime Minister outlined the transformed political dynamics in South Asia and his resolve for South Asia to intensify regional economic cooperation for which European experience could provide valuable lessons. The two Prime Ministers announced the establishment of Chairs in each other's universities. It was also agreed that a "Festival of India in Italy" would be inaugurated in October, 1998 which would run for one year in different parts of Italy. The process of further intensifying economic relations would be continued during the forthcoming visit of the Italian Prime Minister to India in January, 1998.

Prime Minister visited Edinburgh to participate in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. He was invited to address the opening ceremony on behalf of the participating Heads of Government. Prime Ministe's discussions with Prime Minister Tony Blair of UK were friendly, constructive, and included review of bilateral relations and other issues of mutual interest. The meeting focussed mainly on economic issues. The two Prime Ministers agreed that the Queen's visit was a success. Prime Minister Blair expressed the growing economic content in the relationship and restated his Government's view that the UK was not seeking to mediate in Kashmir issue and that they respected India's view that this was a bilateral issue which was for India and Pakistan to address.

Statement

Salient Features of Prime Minister's visits to Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa

TANZANIA

1. First visit by an Indian Prime Minister in over a decade.
2. Substantive discussions with President Benjamin Mkapa, Zanzibar President Salmin Amour and telephonic communication with former President Julius Nyerere.
3. Visits to two wholly owned Indian ventures in Dar-es-Salaam-International Medical and Technological University (IMTU) run by Vignan Educational Foundation of Bangalore and National Bicycle Company recently taken over by Avon Cycles of Ludhiana. Several Indian companies have also won internationally funded contracts in Tanzania in recent past. PM inaugurated 'Gujral Block' of IMTU and donated books and laboratory equipment. GOI would sponsor three Tanzania students each year at the IMTU.
4. Commitment of relief assistance by India of 1000 tonnes of rice to mainland Tanzania and 100 tonnes to Zanzibar to help alleviate impact of drought.
5. Waiver of outstanding dues (about Rs. 35lakhs) on account of training imparted to Tanzanian military personnel in the past.
6. Agreement on utilization of outstanding dues from past commercial credits (about Rs. 23 crores) for local investment in mutually identified Indian ventures in Tanzania.
7. Five computer units donated to Nyerere Foundation in Dar-es-Salaam committed to promoting ideals of peace, unity and development in Africa.
8. Interaction with Indian community and business community in Tanzania.
9. Tanzanian President publicly supported India's candidature for permanent membership of restructured UN Security Council.

UGANDA

1. First ever visit by any Indian Prime Minister.
2. Unveiling of Mahatma Gandhi's bust at the source of the Nile where his ashes were immersed in August 1948.
3. Air Services Agreement and Cultural Exchange Programme concluded.
4. Commitment of support for feasibility study for small-scale industrial estate at Jinja.
5. Gift of 25 tonnes of high yielding maize seeds and 100 agricultural pumps to help combat drought.
6. Support for preparation of detailed project report for mini hydroelectric plant.
7. Establishment of demonstration sunflower oil project.
8. Gift of demonstration solar energy equipment (already installed.).
9. Increase in ITEC solts for training of Ugandan military cadets (special course to be conducted at Officers Training Schools at Chennai from November, 1997)
10. President Museveni keen on Indian investment in exploitation of Uganda's phosphates hydrocarbons and iron ore deposits.

SOUTH AFRICA

1. First ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister (President Mandela has visited India thrice).
2. Visits to Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Meetings with President Mandela, Deputy President Mbeki and several national and provincial Ministers.
3. Addrsss to South African Parliament at Cape Town where PM outlined specific measures to invest "Strategic partnership" between the two countries with new content and direction.
4. Visits to sites associated with Gandhiji's stay in South Africa — Tolstoy Farm and Fort at Johannesburg and Phoenix Settlement near Durban. PM announced an initial contribution of US$ 100,000 towards restoration of these sites to which both countries are jointly committed. He also announced institution of scheme of 12 annual awards to South Africans for outstanding contributions to community development, communal harmony and research on Gandhiji's work in South Africa (a corpus of Rs. 10 crores in intended to be invested for this purpose)
5. Establishment of a Chair on Gandhian Studies at University of Durban Westville and of a Gandhi Wing at Institute of Peace and Reconciliation to be set up at robben Island.
6. Agreement on cooperation in geology and mineral resources and in tourism concluded. Programme of cooperation in science and technology also signed. India Tourist Office inaugurated during PM's visit.
7. Terms of Reference of Indo-South African Commercial Alliance agreed to (roughly on lines of Indo-US Business Alliance and Indo-British Partnership). A CII Office has been opened in Johannesburg and 'Made in India' Show is to be inaugurated in Februrary. 1998.
8. Offer to assist South Africa in organisation of NAM Summit at Durban in August/September 1998.

Hinduja Power project at Visakhapatnam

*31. DR. MOHAN BABU:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made with respect to 1000 MW Hinduja power project after the laying of foundation stone at Visakhapatnam;

(b) what are the bottlenecks and constraints in the progress of the project;

(c) the steps taken for the removal of the hurdels; and

(d) by when the project is expected to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) The proposal of M/s Hinduja National Power Corporation Limited for implementing the 1040 MW Visakhapatnam Thermal Power Project was accorded techno-economic clearlance by the Central Electricity Authority on 25.7.1996.

(b) and (c) The Coal Supply & Transportation Agreement has to be negotiated and settled between M/s Mahanadi Coalfield Ltd. and M/s Hinduja National Power Corporation Ltd. The provisions of the agreement have also to be acceptable to Railways and Government of Andhra Pradesh. The Power Purchase Agreement between the promoters and Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board can only be finalised thereafter. This process has taken time. Government of India have been monitoring the progress to ensure that all avoidable delays are minimised.

(d) The project is scheduled for commissioning 44 months after the date of financial closure by the promoters.

Implementation of Fifth Pay Commission's recommendation in respect of clerks

*32. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Upper and Lower Division Clerks in the Central Secretariat Clerical Service